

## **Minutes of DAAC Meeting**

### **Attendance**

DAAC members present were: Seren Derin, Chair; Irene Barrelet, Clerk; Joan Rising; Jim MacRostie, and Dana Goddard.

Others present were Tony Maroulis, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce; Nathaniel Malloy, DAAC staff liaison; and members of the public Jane Gamache

Absent: Joe Tringali, Vice-chair;

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### **CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Derin called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

### **MINUTES**

No minutes reviewed.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### *Private Parking Lots*

Ms. Derin explained that members of the Disability Access Advisory Committee (DAAC) have heard concerns and complaints from residents that drivers illegally park in HP spaces on private property, making it difficult for many to enjoy the restaurants and shops in downtown. Mr. Tringali, a member of the DAAC, tried calling the police when a vehicle without a placard was parked in an HP space on private property, but was told that to ticket the vehicle and enforce parking regulations they needed consent of the property owner. The problem is that many private businesses do not enforce parking regulations during the day, let alone in the evenings.

Mr. Maroulis thinks that many property owners do not know that they need to give the Town permission to enforce HP parking on private property. He said that when this issue was discussed in the late spring at a meeting of Promoting Downtown Amherst (PDA), many members were unaware of this problem and the legal aspects of enforcement. He said that with outreach and education it should not be an issue to work with property owners to enter into a voluntary agreement with the Town, allowing the Parking Enforcement Officers and Police to ticket on private property.

Ms. Barrelet suggested that adequate signs need to be installed at every HP space, especially a sign indicating the fine amount per violation; this could help deter people from parking illegally.

Ms. Rising suggested that the HP signs also indicate the hours of enforcement—24 hours a day—to emphasize that drivers can be ticketed after regular business hours and when the public lots are free to use.

Mr. Rising asked if it could be possible to transition metered spots to HP spaces after regular business hours.

Ms. Barrelet said she would like to see an article in the local newspaper discussing the problems with HP parking and the resolutions being considered; this would help with the public outreach.

Mr. Maroulis said that voluntary agreements would actually foster business in the downtown because it would add a presence of enforcement that may help deter people from parking illegally.

Ms. Derin noted that enforcing HP parking regulations would also help business because with the aging population, there are a lot more drivers with placards that need to use those spaces.

Mr. Rising suggested that temporary placards be color-coded to make it easier to know when they expire; this would help with enforcement.

Mr. Maroulis explained that with the budget situation and attrition in the Police Department, enforcement could be a big issue. There needs to be a plan in place outlining enforcement procedures, especially if this would add to the normal rounds. Enforcement could be on a complaint basis.

Ms. Derin asked if increasing the penalty fee to \$300 per violation could help with the extra cost of enforcement.

Mr. Maroulis said that there is a workable solution to this problem without going directly to Town Meeting. He said that the Chamber of Commerce would be willing to work with the DAAC and the Town to help with public outreach and to finalize voluntary agreements.

24-26 Main Street, Notice of Hearing

Mr. Malloy explained that Pasta E Basta had been notified by Architectural Access Board (AAB) that conditions the Board set for a previous variance have not been followed. Furthermore, Pasta E Basta has performed construction work that cost over 1/3 the value of the structure, triggering accessibility requirements. The AAB will hold a hearing to discuss these apparent violations.

Ms. Barrelet noted that the restaurant's front entrance, pick-up area and order counter are not accessible, and that many times, pick-up orders must be paid for and picked up on the second floor. She thinks this may be the least accessible restaurant in downtown.

Ms. Derin said that all restaurants need to be accessible.

Mr. MacRostie said that it is impossible to eat and order food if someone is in a wheelchair.

The Committee agreed on the statement that Pasta E Basta must:

1. Fix the front entrance to make the first floor eatery accessible.
2. Lower counters on the first floor.
3. Pick-up counter needs to be accessible and orders must be brought from second floor to first floor for pick-up.

Atkins Corner Project

Mr. Malloy explained that the transportation funding for the Atkins Corner project is in jeopardy and the Superintendent of Public Works has asked that various Town boards and committees send letters of support to the state and the regional planning agency to continue the funding.

Ms. Derin asked how this funding conundrum would affect the tax incentives given by the Town to Atkins Corner.

Ms. Rising asked why there were two rotaries planned for Route 116 near Atkins Corner, and if this design would benefit pedestrians and cyclists, and would be safe with all the truck traffic.

The Committee agreed that the Atkins Corner area needs to be redesigned to improve pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and to accommodate future village center growth. However, without having seen plans for the redesign of Route 116 the Committee could not vote to continue the transportation funding.

Other

None

**OLD BUSINESS**

High School Auditorium

The Committee is waiting to schedule a site visit to the auditorium.

Jones Library Parking

The Committee is waiting to schedule a site visit to the library.

Other

Mr. Goddard asked if there were any updates on the Amherst Depot. It was reported that a Save Our Stop committee has been formed to research the viability of continuing passenger rail service to Amherst.

Ms. Derin suggested that the Town thank those who registered for the reverse 911 emergency contact system, and let them know that they have helped make the program a success.

Ms. Rising asked if the DAAC could recognize buildings or properties that have made accessible improvement with an honorary award. This could become an annual event similar to the preservation awards previously conferred by the Historical Commission.

Ms. Derin noted that Stavros gives very similar awards and is currently looking for nominations.

**Next Meeting(s)**

September 15, 2009 @ 3:00 pm.

October 13, 2009 @ 3:00 pm.

November 10, 2009 @ 3:00 pm.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Nathaniel Malloy, staff liaison